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3 January 1966

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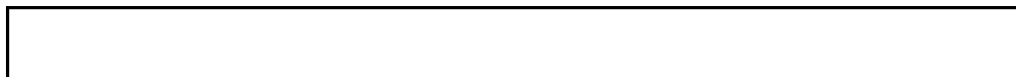
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## INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

AFRICAN RESPONSE TO THE RHODESIAN REBELLION

DIRECTORATE OF INTELLIGENCE  
Office of Current Intelligence

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GROUP 1  
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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY  
Office of Current Intelligence  
3 January 1966

INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

African Response to the Rhodesian Rebellion

Summary

The Rhodesian rebellion has demonstrated again the fundamental radical-moderate division in Africa, exposed the impotence of the Africans, and awakened bitter feelings of frustration which may lead to actions against Western interests. The impetuous 3 December resolution of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), steamrolled through by a comparatively small group of foreign ministers, was actually implemented by only a handful of radical countries, and even then probably only because of the energetic efforts of Tanzanian President Nyerere and OAU Secretary General Diallo Telli. The majority of more moderate states rallied around public statements questioning the wisdom of the resolution by the Presidents of Zambia and Kenya, the Prime Minister of Nigeria, and the Emperor of Ethiopia and prevented a stampede. The crisis has, however, reopened fissures in the OAU, and may hasten the fragmentation of Africa into competing blocs. The radical states, especially Tanzania, although realizing that overt African military intervention is beyond their present capabilities, will continue their activist roles if economic sanctions--in which they have not the slightest faith--do not speedily bring down the Smith regime. They may support sabotage and terrorism in the hope of causing a breakdown of law and order within Rhodesia, in the hope of forcing Britain to intervene militarily.

### African Frustration

1. The crisis over Rhodesia has dramatized once again both the division in Africa between the militant states and the majority of more moderate countries, and the extreme difficulty of pursuing a common policy through the Organization of African Unity (OAU). In exposing Africa's impotence before the world, the crisis has awakened bitter feelings of frustration, humiliation and racial inferiority which may lead to extreme, and sometimes irrational actions against Western interests.

2. Africa's intense emotion about Rhodesia and its inability to take any effective action to alter the situation were reflected in the resolution passed by the OAU Council of Ministers on 3 December to break diplomatic relations with London if it had not "taken steps to crush" the Smith regime by 15 December. The "unanimous" vote can be attributed to the zeal of the more activist foreign ministers and the inability of others to make the voice of reason heard in such an emotional atmosphere. Several countries spoke against the resolution but subsequently caved in under the strenuous pressure.

3. The activism of the foreign ministers is probably much more representative of general African popular sentiment than the subsequent back-tracking of their chiefs of state. The resolution was not binding on member countries and nearly all of them had second thoughts about the wisdom of actually breaking relations with the UK. Some had important economic or military assistance at stake and most realized that a break would do nothing to solve the Rhodesian problem and, in fact, would make Britain's task more difficult.

4. Nine of the more militant states eventually broke with London, but those with any important economic ties with the UK have made it clear that theirs is a diplomatic gesture that hopefully will not affect working relations. Khartoum seems content to let the full British staff remain except for the Ambassador and military attaché, for whom no departure deadline was given. Cairo and Algiers would like to retain British consular representation and have allowed British diplomats a month to depart. Guinea, Mali, Mauritania and Congo (Brazzaville) had no significant ties with London.

5. The only countries which took any meaningful action were the two Commonwealth members, Tanzania and Ghana, and London appears ready to cooperate in keeping the economic disruption to a minimum. Tanzania's President Nyerere will permit some British diplomats to remain in Dar es Salaam with the Canadian Embassy, and will allow the UK the full use of Tanzanian facilities in support of Zambia. He has assured the 1,200 British members of the Tanzanian civil service of their safety. Both Nyerere and Ghana's President Nkrumah intend to remain in the Commonwealth for the time being, although the latter appears to be seriously contemplating leaving the grouping before very long. Within Ghana there has been strong opposition to the break

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6. In all probability even the militant countries might not have broken with the UK if it had not been for the agitation of three radical leaders: Nyerere, Guinea's President Touré and OAU Secretary General Diallo Telli, a national of Guinea. Public statements by Zambia's Kaunda, Ethiopia's Haile Selassie, Kenya's Kenyatta and Nigeria's Balewa expressing the misgivings felt by most African leaders about the resolution were probably all that prevented the majority of African states from being stampeded into a rupture with London.

#### Nyerere in the Van

7. Nyerere played the principal role in goading others to abide by the OAU resolution and in creating the illusion that there was an Africa-wide momentum toward a break which no revolutionary African leader could afford to ignore.

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8. Following Kaunda's statement of 8 December that a break by Zambia, Kenya and Tanzania would cause difficulties for Zambia and the UK's contingency support plans, the Tanzanians urged Nasir to use his influence to convince Kaunda nevertheless to implement the

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resolution. Kaunda met Nyerere on 11 December in the hope of persuading him not to break, but Nyerere claims he convinced Kaunda of the necessity for all Africans, with the exception of Zambia, to go ahead.

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In a press conference the same day he said that African countries must stop "using" Zambia to connive to get out of their commitment to the resolution; the validity of that resolution could not be questioned as the foreign ministers had been given a clear mandate from the heads of state.

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#### The Radical Bandwagon

10. Meanwhile, Diallo Telli was waging a hard campaign from Addis Ababa to keep OAU members in line on the 15 December deadline.

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11. There is little doubt that all this activity created the desired bandwagon effect, especially after Guinea and Tanzania actually broke with London on the 15th.

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13. Mali, Mauritania, and Congo (Brazzaville) also broke relations on 16 December. That same evening Cairo announced its break in a move that surprised both British and Egyptian diplomats. Although Egypt had been lobbying at Addis for military action by the OAU, apparently it had been relatively reserved on the ultimatum to the UK. On 13 December Cairo had called for another OAU foreign ministers' meeting on 21 December to examine the situation in the light of the reservations expressed by many member countries about the resolution.

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14. In light of Cairo's action, the Sudanese Government reversed its position on the evening of the 17th and agreed to break. Algeria's announcement on the next day completed the show of solidarity by all the more militant states

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Somali officials, who made a state visit to Tanzania in mid-December, have also taken a militant stand on the OAU resolution, although their country has had no relations with the UK since 1963.

15. The radicals' momentum has been temporarily broken, but in Addis the atmosphere remains emotional and the extremists--including major elements in the Ethiopian power structure--are putting great pressure on the Emperor. Reportedly Egypt, Ghana, Guinea and Tanzania, in pressing Ethiopia to sever relations, are using the telling argument that Addis is not a fit site for the OAU headquarters if Ethiopia is unwilling to implement the decisions of the body, and are threatening to back a shift to another capital unless the Emperor goes along. The radicals are also attacking Nigerian Prime Minister Balewa as a "stalking horse for Britain" because of his refusal to break relations and his call for a Commonwealth conference in January.

The Moderates Shore Themselves Up

16. In an effort to ease the pressure on the moderates, Kenyatta, Uganda's President Obote, and the Emperor--consulting in Nairobi on 19 December--called for an immediate meeting of African heads of state, although there had been almost no response to the Emperor's earlier call for summit consultations or to Cairo's request for another foreign ministers' meeting. Both Kenyatta and Obote spoke strongly about the foolishness of a diplomatic break and were disdainful of those, like Nyerere, who cut relations but expected British aid to continue. The Emperor was less forthright. Kenyatta also castigated his fire-eating foreign minister, in the presence of the others, for presuming to commit Kenya to such a resolution. Any summit meeting would follow the Commonwealth conference scheduled for 10 January in Lagos.

17. This spate of calls for urgent meetings has created confusion in many African capitals, where chiefs of state are either uncertain how to proceed or believe that there is nothing to be gained by further conferences. The militants oppose a summit gathering on the grounds that the Addis resolution was final, but they seem to approve of Cairo's suggestion for another foreign ministers' meeting which would be empowered to implement it unanimously.

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Strains on the OAU

18. In pushing for implementation on the basis of African solidarity, Nyerere and the other radicals have, in fact, reopened old fissures in the OAU. They would probably prefer to pursue their militant objectives in Rhodesia under an OAU umbrella, but some are moving toward the view that an Africa composed of various blocs would be preferable to the present virtually ineffective OAU. Few Africans have the slightest confidence in the success of the economic sanctions against Rhodesia, and many believe that African-supported terrorism is the only practical policy to apply in Rhodesia. Since Wilson has reiterated that British force can only be used in Rhodesia when law and order is threatened, they feel Africa must create such conditions.

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19. The militants recognize that they have few assets to work with in Rhodesia. The OAU Committee of Five created in Accra last October is already engaged in military planning, however. Although more manageable than the entire OAU, its membership--Tanzania, Zambia, Kenya, Nigeria, and Egypt--carries some of the same conflicts of the full OAU. Rhodesians in the Committee's Mbeya training camp in western Tanzania apparently include some recent returnees from the USSR. Other Rhodesians will soon be returning from military training in Algeria.

20. Although overt military intervention by the OAU seems out of the question at this time, among the nine states who have broken with Britain are nearly all those (Uganda excepted) who militarily supported the Congolese rebels last year. This time they have fewer human resources, but greater experience, ample materiel stockpiled in Tanzania, and a cause with almost universal black African backing. A major problem again will be a divided leadership among the indigenous nationalists.

#### Prospects

21. As in last year's Congo crisis, Nyerere is far beyond the African mainstream and Tanzania will almost certainly play a major role in the fight against the Smith regime. He is a man of great principle and a fanatic on the question of southern Africa's liberation. He views Rhodesia as the key to the Portuguese territories and South Africa, and the fact that Africa's assets are limited at the moment will not alter his determination to solve the problem one way or another.

22. The militants, however, can be effective only if they have the use of Zambia as a staging area. This is probably why Nyerere has urged Kaunda not to allow British troops to be stationed in Zambia, and why he is so adamant that they should be posted on the Rhodesian side of the Kariba dam. He fears Kaunda will be hesitant to provide Zambian facilities for Rhodesian terrorists as long as Smith can threaten destruction of Kariba. Nyerere, however, is sincerely concerned with Kaunda's survival and the eventual development of close economic ties and political union between Tanzania and Zambia.

23. Some other militant Africans may be willing to push matters even further.

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**OFFICE OF CURRENT INTELLIGENCE**

**3 January 1966**

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